

# JIABS

Journal of the International  
Association of Buddhist Studies



Volume 35 Number 1–2 2012 (2013)

# JIABS

Journal of the International  
Association of Buddhist Studies

Volume 35 Number 1–2 2012 (2013)

## Articles

Megan BRYSON

*Mahākāla worship in the Dali kingdom (937–1253) – A study  
of the Dahei tianshen daochang yi* . . . . . 3

Thomas CRUIJSEN, Arlo GRIFFITHS, Marijke J. KLOKKE

*The cult of the Buddhist dhāraṇī deity Mahāpratisarā along  
the Maritime Silk Route: New epigraphical and iconographic  
evidence from the Indonesian Archipelago* . . . . . 71

Roderick ORLINA

*Epigraphical evidence for the cult of Mahāpratisarā in the  
Philippines* . . . . . 159

Vincent ELTSCHINGER

*Aśvaghoṣa and his canonical sources II – Yaśas, the Kāśyapa  
brothers and the Buddha's arrival in Rājagṛha (Buddhacarita  
16.3–71)* . . . . . 171

Paul K. NIETUPSKI

*Atha niryāṇavṛttam: Reflections on the first sūtra and the  
opening passages of Guṇaprabha's Vinayasūtra and Auto-  
commentary – With reference to Indian and Tibetan  
commentaries* . . . . . 225

Reiko OHNUMA

*An elephant good to think – The Buddha in Pārileyyaka for-  
est* . . . . . 259

Jin Y. PARK	
<i>A Huayanist reading of the Lotus Sūtra – The case of Li Tong-xuan</i> .....	295
Barbara GERKE	
<i>‘Treating the aged’ and ‘Maintaining health’ – Locating bcud len practices in the four Tibetan medical tantras</i> . . . . .	329
Eviatar SHULMAN	
<i>The Aṭṭhakavagga as Buddhist poetry</i> .....	363
Chizuko YOSHIMIZU	
<i>Reasoning-for-others in Candrakīrti’s Madhyamaka thought</i> . . .	413
	•
<i>Notes on the contributors</i> .....	445

## A Huayanist reading of the *Lotus Sūtra*

The case of Li Tongxuan<sup>1</sup>

Jin Y. Park

This essay examines a Huayanist understanding of the *Lotus Sūtra*, focusing on Chinese Huayan thinker Li Tongxuan's 李通玄 (635–730) *Exposition on the Eighty-Fascicle Version of the Flower Ornament Scripture* (*Xin Huayan jing lun* 新華嚴經論). The first section of the essay discusses Li's doctrinal classification and the position of the *Lotus Sūtra* (*Miaofa lianhua jing* 妙法蓮華經) in that structure. The second section explores Li's interpretation of the dragon girl's story in the *Lotus Sūtra* in comparison with the story of the youth Sudhana (Shancai tongzi 善財童子) in the *Huayan jing* 華嚴經. In the third section, I will try to demonstrate why Li was so occupied with the dragon girl's story and how it reveals the core themes of his Huayan Buddhism and the inner contradiction of the *Lotus Sūtra* from Li's point of view.

The *Lotus Sūtra* and the *Huayan jing* are without a doubt two of the most well-known scriptures in East Asian Buddhist traditions.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> An earlier version of this paper was presented at the International *Lotus Sūtra* Seminar organized by Risshō Kōseikai in January 2010. I thank Gene Reeves for inviting me to this excellent seminar and also thank participants for valuable comments on my paper. I also thank the reviewer of *the Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* who offered me detailed comments on the earlier version of this essay. This work was supported by the Academy of Korean Studies (KSPS) Grant funded by the Korean Government (MEST) (AKS2013-AAZ-104).

<sup>2</sup> The position and importance of the *Lotus Sūtra* in the development of Indian Buddhism is not clear. For a brief discussion on the issue, see Silk 2001. Silk points out that the Sanskrit manuscripts of the *Lotus Sūtra* have been found in Gilgit, Nepal and Central Asia, but their actual role in the evolution of Buddhism is unclear. Diverse interpretations of the *Lotus Sūtra*

It would be futile to try to summarize how these scriptures have been utilized in various Buddhist schools both for ordained and lay communities from ancient times to the current period.

There exist two complete Chinese translations of the *Lotus Sūtra*. Modern western language translations are commonly based on *Miaofa lianhua jing* 妙法蓮華經 translated by Kumārajīva 鳩摩羅什 (344–413). The other translation was done by Dharmarakṣa 法護 (203?–316) in the title *Zhengfahua jing* 正法華經.<sup>3</sup> The scripture has been the foundational teaching of Buddhist schools from the pre-modern to modern period as in the case of Chinese Tiantai 天台 Buddhism founded by Zhiyi 智顛 (538–597) and Japanese Tendai established by Saichō 最澄 (779–822). New religions in the twentieth century also took the *Lotus Sūtra* as the foundational teaching as is witnessed in the case of Reiyūkai Kyōdan 靈友会教団 (established in 1920), and Risshōkōseikai 立正佼正会 (established in 1938), both of which are lay Buddhist groups.<sup>4</sup> In the context of Korean Buddhism, one of the earliest attentions to the scripture was paid by Wŏnhyo 元曉 (617–686) in his *Pōphwa chongyo* 法華宗要 (*Doctrinal essentials of the Lotus Sūtra*).<sup>5</sup> In terms of practice, Yose’s 了世(1164–1245) practice of the teachings of the *Lotus Sūtra* through the White Lotus Society (Paengnyŏn kyōlsa 白蓮結社) is most noticeable in pre-modern Korean Buddhism.<sup>6</sup>

---

have a long history in the evolution of Buddhism in China, Korea, and Japan. For a most recent scholarship on the survey of the composition and evolution of the *Lotus Sūtra*, its role in Indian and Mahāyāna Buddhism, main themes of the scripture, Buddhist practice related to the *sūtra*, and Buddhist schools related to the *Lotus Sūtra*, see Teiser and Stone 2009. A research on the Indo-Greek background of the *Lotus Sūtra* by employing material culture can be found in Tsukamoto 2007. For a comparative study of the *Lotus Sūtra* and *Huayan jing*, please see Liu 1988.

<sup>3</sup> For a discussion on the translation history of the *Lotus Sūtra* in Chinese and western language, and early study of the *Lotus Sūtra*, see Li 2003: 3–17.

<sup>4</sup> See Hardacre 1989.

<sup>5</sup> English translation by Muller 2012.

<sup>6</sup> For a discussion on Yose’s and his disciples’ practice of the *Lotus Sūtra*, see Li 2003: 297–233.

*Huayan jing* exists in three different translations which are also three different versions: (1) the sixty-fascicle version was translated by Buddhahadra 佛馱跋陀 around 420; (2) the eighty-fascicle version was translated by Śikṣānanda 實叉難陀 around 699; and (3) the forty-fascicle version was translated by Prajñā 般若 around 800. The sixty-fascicle is also known as the *Old Sūtra* (*Jiujing* 舊經) and the eighty-fascicle as the *New Sūtra* (*Xinjing* 新經). The forty-fascicle version contains only the “Entering the Realm of Reality” (*Ru fajie pin* 入法界品) chapter which is the thirty-fourth chapter of the sixty-fascicle version of the *Huayan jing*, and the thirty-ninth chapter of the eighty-fascicle version of the *Huayan jing*.<sup>7</sup> It is important for our discussion to be aware of the existence of three different versions of the *Huayan jing*, since Li Tongxuan’s discussion of Huayan Buddhism is based on the eighty-fascicle *Huayan jing*.

### 1. The Lotus Sūtra and Li Tongxuan’s doctrinal classification

In the tradition of Chinese Huayan Buddhism, Li Tongxuan is considered to be an unorthodox thinker whose ideas demonstrate a visible difference from the thinkers in the ‘orthodox’ tradition, such as Dushun 杜順 (557–640), Zhiyan 知儼 (602–668), and Fazang 法藏 (643–712).<sup>8</sup> According to a hagiographical record of Li Tongxuan,

<sup>7</sup> For a discussion on the composition and circulation of the three versions of *Huayan jing*, see Haeju sunim 1999: 23–24. Haeju points out that the *Huayan jing* was not composed as one unified *sūtra*, but the *sūtra* was created for a substantial period of time; also see Kyehwan 1996: 17–37; and Cook 1977. In Cook’s book, see especially Chapter 2 which discusses the translation of the *sūtra*, and Chapter 3 which discusses the Indian background of Huayan Buddhism. It seems that scholars generally agree that at least two chapters of the *Huayan jing* exist in Sanskrit: the chapter on “Ten Stages” (*Shidi pin* 十地品 *Daśabhūmika*) and the chapter “Entering the Realm of Reality” (*Ru fajie pin* 入法界品 *Gaṇḍavyūha*). For major themes of Huayan Buddhism, see Nakamura 1960; Kamata 1988; and, in English, Chang 1971.

<sup>8</sup> In the context of Korean Buddhism, Li Tongxuan’s Huayan Buddhism is well known for having had influences on Pojo Chinul (普照知訥 1158–1210), the founder of the Korean Zen Buddhist tradition. As is discussed in this essay, Li’s emphasis that the core teaching of the *Huayan jing* is that there is not even an infinitesimal difference between the buddha and the sentient being became a foundation of Chinul’s Zen Buddhism. Further emphasizing

Li began his study of the eighty-fascicles of the *Huayan jing* around 709, at the age of 74. For the next thirteen years he would peruse the scripture in seclusion, and only after that did he begin writing the exposition. The exposition was discovered in 774, several decades after Li's death, by a monk named Guangchao 廣超, who then distributed it to his own disciples.<sup>9</sup> Not much is known about Li's life before he began his study of the eighty-fascicle *Huayan jing*, which was translated into Chinese in 699.<sup>10</sup> Both Zhiyan and Fazang based their discussions of *Huayan jing* on the sixty-fascicle version translated in 420.

At the beginning of the *Exposition on the Eighty-Fascicle Version of Flower Ornament Scripture* (henceforth *Exposition on the Huayan jing*), Li Tongxuan offers his own taxonomy of the Buddhist teachings following the tradition of the time. The third patriarch of Huayan Buddhism, Fazang, who has been credited as a major architect of Huayan Buddhist philosophy, offers a fivefold taxonomy of Buddhist teachings in his *Essay on the Five Teachings of Huayan Buddhism* (*Huayan wujiao zhang* 華嚴五教章). The five categories are as follows: (1) Hīnayāna Teaching (*xiaoshengjiao* 小乘教); (2) Mahāyāna Inception Teaching (*dasheng shijiao* 大乘始教); (3) Mahāyāna Final Teaching (*dasheng zhongjiao* 大乘終教); (4) Sudden Teaching (*dunjiao* 頓教); and (5) Complete Teaching

---

the identity between the Buddha and the sentient being, Chinul teaches “the mind is the Buddha” (心即佛). For an English translation of Chinul's work, see Buswell 1983.

<sup>9</sup> Gimello 1983: 373. In the Appendix of his essay, Gimello offers “A Translation of the Earliest Surviving Hagiography of Li T'ung-hsün,” which is a translation of “A Record of the Life of the Elder Li, Author of the Exposition of the Translation of the Newly Translated *Mahāvaiṣṭyabuddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra*” (*Li zhangzhe shiji* 李長者事跡) by Mazhi 馬支 around 770 (X4n225 p832a–833a).

<sup>10</sup> Extant records on Li's biography offer mixed information: some say that Li was from Beijing and was a member of the royal family of Tang China (T36n1741p1011c). Others record him merely as a person from Cangzhou 滄州 (X4n225B). The year of his birth was also recorded either as 735 or 746. See Inaoka 1981. For a list of existing records of Li Tongxuan's biography, see Lim 2008: 13–14.

(*yuanjiao* 圓教).<sup>11</sup> The Complete Teaching refers to the Huayan School, as was usually the case, and demonstrates the superiority of the Huayan teaching over the teachings of other Buddhist schools.<sup>12</sup> The demonstrated goal of the taxonomy in Li's classification seems to be the same as that of Fazang. Like Fazang, Li assigns the *Huayan jing* at the final stage of the evolution of the Buddha's teaching, through which he confirms the superiority of the Huayan teaching over other Buddhist schools. However, it is also true that the layout of different teachings in Li's taxonomy is suggestive of some of the main themes of his Huayan thought.

The Huayan School considers ten to be the perfect number, a belief which Fazang also expressed in his *Essay on the Five Teachings*,<sup>13</sup> in which he explains major Huayan concepts by using the example of counting the numbers one through ten.<sup>14</sup> Li is even more faithful to this idea of ten being the perfect number and representing Huayan Buddhism. Most of his hermeneutical devices designed to elaborate Huayan Buddhism utilize the number; hence, he proposes a tenfold doctrinal classification. At the first level, Li locates (1) the Hīnayāna precept scriptures (*xiaosheng jiejing* 小乘戒經), which he claims are teachings leveled at the capacity of sentient beings. The main aim of these teachings is to edify sentient beings by offering distinctions between what is right and what is wrong. Given the nature of Buddhist teachings, however, this type of distinction cannot offer teachings on the true nature of existence. At the second level, Li places the (2) *Sūtra of the Bodhisattva Precepts* (*Pusajie jing* 菩薩戒經). The goal of this stage of teaching is to make truth visible to the sentient beings while at the same time maintaining the goal of the first level. At the third level lie the (3) teachings of *prajñāpāramitā* (*boruo jiao* 般若教). This is the stage at which the Buddha teaches emptiness in order to demonstrate the

<sup>11</sup> Fazang, T45n1866p 481b.

<sup>12</sup> For a discussion of Fazang's doctrinal classification, see Liu 1979.

<sup>13</sup> Fazang, T45n1866p503b.

<sup>14</sup> Huayan Buddhism is not the only Buddhist tradition that takes the number 10 as special. Another such tradition is Tiantai Buddhism. For a discussion on the Tiantai use of the number 10, see Chen 1999: 87–88.



true nature of reality. After this comes (4) *The Sūtra Explaining the Underlying Meaning* (*Jie shenmi jing* 解深蜜經), in which the Buddha teaches neither emptiness nor existence. The fifth stage is assigned to the (5) *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* (*Lengqie jing* 楞伽經), whose main teaching Li defines through the Five Laws, Three Self Natures, Eight Consciousnesses, and Twofold No-self. (6) *Vimalakīrtisūtra* complements the teaching of the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* by emphasizing the nonduality of purity and impurity and thus revealing the state of the inconceivable. Following *Vimalakīrtisūtra* in Li's classification are the teachings of (7) the *Lotus Sūtra*, which offer a way to reach truth through skillful means. Li assigns (8) *The Great Collection Scripture* (*Daji jing* 大集經) to the eighth stage, the goal of which is to protect the teachings of the Buddha. (9) The *Nirvāṇasūtra* (*Niepan jing* 涅槃經) reveals the Buddha-nature in sentient beings. (10) The *Huayan jing* is the final stage, with its main teachings concerning the idea that “the cause is perfect and effect complete, one and many are mutually interpenetrating, principle and phenomena in the realm of reality are self-reliant, and there is no obstruction in dependent-arising. Therefore it is called the Buddha-vehicle.”<sup>15</sup>

Fazang's taxonomy proposes “five teachings and ten schools” (*wujiao shizong* 五教十宗); Li's taxonomy proposes “ten schools and ten teachings” (*shizong shijiao* 十宗十教). Li's proposal of the ten teachings is almost identical to his outline of the ten schools. The only exceptions are two scriptures, – (2) the *Sūtra of the Bodhisattva Precepts* and (8) *The Great Collection Scripture* – which are not included in the ten teachings. In lieu of these two scriptures, Li adds two stages at the end and proposes that the Buddha delivered his teachings in the following order: 1. teachings of Hīnayāna; 2. teachings of *prajñāpāramitā*; 3. teachings of *The Sūtra Explaining the Underlying Meaning*; 4. teachings of the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*; 5. teachings of *Vimalakīrtisūtra*; 6. teachings of the *Lotus Sūtra*; 7. teachings of the *Nirvāṇasūtra*; 8. teachings of the *Huayan jing*; 9. shared and distinctive teachings (*gong bugong jiao* 共不共教); and 10. distinctive and shared teachings (*bugong gong jiao* 不共共

<sup>15</sup> Li Tongxuan, T36n1739p721c. Translations from Classical Chinese in this essay are mine unless otherwise noted.

教) (T36n1739p735c–736a). The shared and distinctive teachings indicate that even though the Buddha teaches the same thing to everybody (the shared aspect), depending on the capacity of each being, sentient beings understand them differently (the distinctive aspect). The distinctive and shared teachings indicate that even though sentient beings are all different (the distinctive aspect), they share all the same benefits of the fruition virtue of the Buddha. It is worthwhile to point out that Li Tongxuan paid special attention to the issue of differences in the phenomenal world, despite the sharedness of the noumenal reality. At the same time, in a typical Huayan approach, Li quickly closes the issue of phenomenal difference by emphasizing sameness on the noumenal level, leaving the issue of how to address fundamental differences existing on the phenomenal level unanswered.

The tenfold doctrinal classification, briefly listed above, provides a thematic structure that is indicative of the philosophical foundation of Li's Huayan Buddhism. In its understanding of the being and the world, Buddhism takes the position of nonsubstantialism. That is, at its bottom, it rejects the existence of unchanging substance or essence as an underlying reality and a reference for epistemological and ontological speculation about beings and the world. Being a non-substantial mode of thinking, Buddhism has long been aware of the problems it faces in articulating appearance and reality. In appearance, things exist with seemingly visible duration, whereas in reality, beings do not have an enduring essence. The vision is counterintuitive. If things do not have enduring identity, how do they attain identity at all? Moreover, the use of language and discourse to impart the Buddha's teaching ironically challenges the fundamental thesis of Buddhist thought. A linguistic system and a discourse become possible through the sustainability of their constituents, whereas Buddhism negates such durable identities. The evolution of schools in the history of Buddhist philosophy reflects this dilemma. Buddhist schools in the evolution of Buddhism had to deal with the issue of how one constructs and presents a discourse using language while what is being presented through that medium challenges the sustainability innate in the construction of a discourse. One noticeable feature that different Buddhist

thinkers have employed in an effort to overcome this problem of the gap between what has come to be called, in the Buddhist tradition, ‘conventional’ and ‘ultimate realities,’ is an alternating emphasis on existence and non-existence. The Buddha’s claim concerning non-self opposes the idea of emphasizing the existence of the self in the form of *ātman*; the Abhidharma discourse, especially the Sarvāstivāda School, makes efforts to present something that exists in the Buddha’s theory of non-self (*anātman*) and consequently claims that *dharma*s exist, whereas self does not; Mādhyamika philosophy reveals the emptiness of all *dharma*s, warning of the risk that Sarvāstivādin’s efforts might engender.

Li’s tenfold doctrinal classification well reflects this back-and-forth movement in Buddhist thought with regard to existence and non-existence. At the first stage of teachings in the Hīnayāna precepts, the Buddha teaches what is right and what is wrong, as well as what acts should be performed and what acts should not be. This, Li explains, is because the goal of the teachings at this stage is leveled at the capacity of sentient beings, who, because of their sentience, understand reality in the dualistic way of good and bad, right and wrong. This stage, however, contains its own problems by setting up what is right and what is wrong, and what is good and what is bad. Such distinctions and labels are possible only when one subscribes to the substantial concept of identity, be it goodness or evil, rightness or wrong. The stage of bodhisattva precepts as it appears in scriptures like *The Sūtra of Brahma’s Net* also offers advice on what to follow and what not to, but compared to the precepts in the Hīnayāna tradition, Li claims, bodhisattva precepts are offered for practitioners with a greater capacity. Both the first and second levels, however, risk the danger of reifying the given precepts and teachings, thus contributing to the practitioner’s misunderstanding of the reality of the world and its own existence. The third-stage teaching of emptiness is introduced for the purpose of preventing any reification of established thought at the first two stages. The core of the teaching of the Prajñāpāramitā literature states that, in Li’s words, “The three treasures, the four noble truths, and the three worlds are all empty and emptiness itself is empty” (世間三寶四諦三世等。一切皆空。空亦空。 T36n1739p722a). From Li’s

perspective, however, this stage of teaching emptiness cannot be the final and perfect teaching. That is because, in it, construction and destruction are constantly repeated: a discourse is set up, and then, in order to prevent the reification of categories established by the discourse, a discourse emphasizing emptiness should follow. The discourse of emptiness, according to Li, presupposes a subject-object dualism since in order for the discourse of emptiness to function, there first should exist the object to be destroyed. The question of whether, as in Li's thinking, emptiness can be understood as a synonym for destruction calls for further elaboration on the issue. However, since Li's major concern lies in the Huayan vision, and he was not very sympathetic to the emptiness discourse, Li does not dwell on this issue. What is noteworthy in this context is the temporality involved in the evolution of the first three stages. The way that construction and destruction are demonstrated through the teachings of the first two stages and the third stage of emptiness follows the temporal scheme: the first two stages occur before the third stage. Li distinguishes Huayan teaching from this scheme of temporality and claims that Huayan Buddhism is different from the teaching of *Prajñāpāramitā*, because "in this teaching [of *Prajñāpāramitā*] construction and destruction occur at different time periods, and thus cause comes before and fruition after" (此教成壞別時故。因果前後 T36n1739p722b). As opposed to this concept of temporality, Li claims that the ground of Huayan Buddhism lies in the concept of non-temporality (*wushi* 無時).<sup>16</sup>

Reviewing Li's doctrinal classification with our interest in the *Lotus Sūtra* in mind, we find that his position toward the *Lotus Sūtra* is rather interesting. In his tenfold taxonomy, the *Lotus Sūtra* is situated at the seventh level, below the *Great Collection Scripture* (8<sup>th</sup>), the *Nirvāṇasūtra* (9<sup>th</sup>) and, surely, below the *Huayan jing* (the 10<sup>th</sup>). Throughout his *Exposition on the Huayan jing*, however, Li Tongxuan constantly refers to the *Lotus Sūtra*, whereas he rarely mentions the other two which occupy positions higher than the *Lotus Sūtra* in his classification. Li offers initial discussions about

---

<sup>16</sup> For discussions on the concept of non-temporality in Li Tongxuan, see Park forthcoming.

the *Great Collection Scripture* and the *Nirvāṇasūtra* in introducing his doctrinal chart but does not further elaborate on them. Even though Li understands that the *Lotus Sūtra* is less profound than the *Huayan jing* in terms of its general teaching, there must be some aspects of the *Lotus Sūtra* that caused Li to constantly revisit the scripture. Li's discussion of the *Lotus Sūtra* is unique in that he almost exclusively focuses on the story of the dragon girl who appears in the twelfth chapter of the *Lotus Sūtra*. The dragon girl's story takes up three-fourths of Li's exposition of the work,<sup>17</sup> indicating that it has a special meaning to Li in his understanding of the *Lotus Sūtra*.

## 2. The youth Sudhana and the dragon girl

Several issues demonstrate the major differences between Li's Huayan thoughts and those of 'orthodox' Huayan thinkers. One visible difference appears in the way in which Li understands the structure of the scripture. In his structural analysis of the *Huayan jing*, Zhiyan had proposed the three sectional divisions of the "introduction," the "main body," and the "distributional section."<sup>18</sup> Based on the sixty-fascicle *Huayan jing*, which contains thirty-four chapters, Zhiyan identified the sections following "Chapter on Vairocana" as the main body of the *Huayan jing*. For Zhiyan, the first chapter serves as an introduction and chapters 2 to 34 variously discuss the main themes of the *sūtra*. Zhiyan had stated that the *Huayan jing* does not contain the dissemination section.<sup>19</sup> Fazang follows Zhiyan's structural division in his commentary on the *Huayan jing* (the sixty-fascicle version) and offers subdivisions within Zhiyan's structural analysis but agrees with him that the first chapter is the introduction and that the second chapter and onward are the main body of the *Huayan jing*.<sup>20</sup> Li Tongxuan suggests a division that is radically different from those of Zhiyan and Fazang. Li claims that

<sup>17</sup> Inaoka 1985: 260.

<sup>18</sup> Zhiyan, T35n1732p16a.

<sup>19</sup> Zhiyan, T35n1732p16b.

<sup>20</sup> Fazang, T35n1733p125a.

the chapter of “Entering the Realm of Reality” (*Ru fajie pin* 入法界品), the last and 39<sup>th</sup> chapter of the *Huayan jing* (which is also the last and 34<sup>th</sup> chapter in the sixty-fascicle version), is the main body of the scripture and that the rest are accompanying chapters (T36n1739p770b). The difference between Zhiyan-Fazang and Li in their structural analysis of the *Huayan jing* is not a mere formal issue but is directly related to the difference in their understanding of the essence of Huayan Buddhism. In addition, Li also claims with a strong emphasis that the youth Sudhana, the main character in the “Entering the Realm of Reality” chapter, represents the very core of the *Huayan jing* (T36n1739p731c). This again is a radical declaration that makes Li’s Huayan Buddhism distinctive compared to the orthodox line of Chinese Huayan thinkers. As he understands Sudhana as the representation of Huayan teaching, Li constantly compares the youth Sudhana with the dragon girl in the *Lotus Sūtra* and contends that the dragon girl’s enlightenment demonstrates the same teaching that is represented by the youth Sudhana in the *Huayan jing*. Why, then, does Sudhana represent to Li the core of Huayan teaching and how is this related to the dragon girl?

In the chapter of “Entering the Realm of Reality,” a young truth-seeker named Sudhana is determined to learn to practice the bodhisattva path, having been encouraged by Mañjuśrī’s recognition that he had accumulated the roots of goodness. Sudhana asks Mañjuśrī:

Noble One, please give me a full explanation: how is a bodhisattva to study the bodhisattva path? How is a bodhisattva to practice the bodhisattva path? How is a bodhisattva to initiate the practice of the bodhisattva path? How is a bodhisattva to carry out the practice of bodhisattvas? How is a bodhisattva to purify the bodhisattva path? How is a bodhisattva to fulfill the practice of the bodhisattva path? ... How is a bodhisattva to expand the practice of the bodhisattva path? And how is a bodhisattva to fulfill quickly the sphere of the universally good practice?

唯願聖者廣為我說，菩薩應云何學菩薩行？應云何修菩薩行？應云何趣菩薩行？應云何行菩薩行？應云何淨菩薩行？應云何入菩薩行？... 應

云何增廣菩薩行? 應云何令普賢行速得圓滿?<sup>21</sup>

Instead of offering an answer to these questions, Mañjuśrī directs the young pilgrim to a monk named Meghaśrī (Deyun biqiu 德雲比丘). Mañjuśrī tells the young truth-seeker to go to see him and ask about the bodhisattva path:

Go to him and ask him: “How should a bodhisattva learn the bodhisattva path? How is a bodhisattva to practice the bodhisattva path?” and so on, up to “How is a bodhisattva to quickly fulfill the sphere of universally good action?” Meghaśrī *bhikṣu* should be able to tell you about these.

汝可往問: 菩薩云何學菩薩行? 菩薩云何修菩薩行? 乃至菩薩云何於普賢行疾得圓滿? 德雲比丘當為汝說。<sup>22</sup>

When he hears this, Sudhana is “pleased, transported with joy, and laid his head at the feet of Mañjuśrī in respect, circled Mañjuśrī innumerable times, and attentive to pay the last respect; tears were streaming down his face” (歡喜踊躍, 頭頂禮足, 遶無數匝, 慇懃瞻仰, 悲泣流淚。<sup>23</sup> The description well demonstrates the joy of this young pilgrim when he thinks that he will finally learn about the way of the bodhisattva practice ‘once and for all.’

As he meets Meghaśrī *bhikṣu*, however, Sudhana realizes that Meghaśrī *bhikṣu* is not the only teacher from whom he will learn the bodhisattva path; instead, starting with Meghaśrī *bhikṣu*, each of Sudhana’s teachers continues to refer this truth-seeker to yet another teacher once he or she has shared the truth about spiritual practice that he or she has learned. In Sudhana’s pilgrimage to find the bodhisattva path, there is a constant deferral of meaning and of truth, which does not promise a final goal, unlike a teleological scheme of progress that always moves toward a fixed destination. The youth Sudhana, who is directed to Meghaśrī *bhikṣu* by Mañjuśrī, is referred to Sāgaramegha *bhikṣu* (Haiyun biqiu 海雲

<sup>21</sup> *Huayan jing*, T10n279p333c. English translation by Cleary 1993: 1178, slightly modified.

<sup>22</sup> T10n279p334a; English translation by Cleary 1993: 1179, slightly modified.

<sup>23</sup> T10n279p334a; For a different translation see Cleary 1993: 1179–1180.

比丘); Sāgaramegha *bhikṣu* refers Sudhana to Supraṭiṣṭhita *bhikṣu* (Shanzhu biqiu 善住比丘); and so on, until Sudhana meets fifty-three *dharma* teachers. More interestingly, the fifty-three spiritual benefactors of Sudhana do not consist exclusively of renowned bodhisattvas, monks, or nuns. Among them are a language specialist Megha (Mijia dashi 彌伽大士), a distinguished man named Muktika (Jietuo zhangzhe 解脫長者), a laywoman named Āśā (Xiushe youpoyi 休捨優婆夷), a seer named Bhīṣmottaranirghoṣa (Pimujusha xianren 毘目瞿沙仙人), a girl named Maitrāyaṇī (Cixing tongnu 慈行童女), a boy named Indriyeśvara (Zizaizhu tongzi 自在主童子), a perfumer named Samantanetra (Puyan zhangzhe 普眼長者), a king named Anala (Wuyanzu wang 無厭足王), a mariner named Vaira (Poshiluo chuanshi 婆施羅船師), a nun named Sinhavijurbhitā (Shizipinshen biqiuni 師子頻申比丘尼), and an earth goddess named Sthāvarā (Anzhu dishen 安住地神), in addition to Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva (Guanzizai Pusa 觀自在菩薩), Maitreya, Mañjuśrī, and Samantabhadra Bodhisattva (Puxian Pusa 普賢菩薩), the spiritual benefactors of traditional Buddhism. Using a modern expression, one might say that this list of spiritual benefactors is very ‘politically correct;’ it includes both monks and nuns, laymen and laywomen, kings, goddesses, a girl and boys, and commoner workers.<sup>24</sup> At the final stage of his journey, Sudhana meets Maitreya, who puts Sudhana into the great *samādhi* at the tower of Vairocana, the Buddha of Light. What does this pilgrimage of Sudhana imply to Li to make him claim that Sudhana is the very presentation of the teaching of Huayan Buddhism?

First, Sudhana is a symbolic presentation of the fundamental tenet of Huayan Buddhism that at the moment when one raises the mind to practice the bodhisattva path, one immediately attains awakening (*chu faxin shi bian cheng zhengjue* 初發心時便成正覺). For Li, the youth Sudhana represents the idea that enlightenment is attained in a single lifetime (*yisheng chengfo* 一生成佛), not

<sup>24</sup> To be exact, the fifty-three *dharma* teachers include: five monks, a nun, four female lay-devotees, two kings, nine rich men, two householders, three women, four boys, a girl, two Brahmins, a seer, a non-Buddhist, a ship-carpenter, eleven gods, a goddess, and five bodhisattvas. Muller 2007: “五十三善知識。”



through *kalpas* of practice. In identifying Sudhana's pilgrimage as the attainment of buddhahood in a single lifetime, Li explains the meaning of "a single lifetime" as follows:

That Sudhana obtained buddhahood in a single life means that in the mind at one moment of the initial stage of the Ten Abodes (*shizhu* 十住), if feelings disappear and conceptualizations are exhausted, the three worlds are like one thought-moment and there is nothing to be born; this is what is meant by a single lifetime. This is not a life based on time divisions which grasp feelings and establish the *kalpas*. This can be said the unborn, in which one accomplishes suddenly the fruition of the Buddha. Such is the original life; hence, it is called a single lifetime.

如善財童子一生成佛者，明於十住初心一剎那際，情亡想盡，三世一念，更無所生，名為一生。不取存情立劫時分之生，如是無生，便成佛果。如本生，故名為一生。(T36n1739p761b)

Li later further elaborates on the meaning of "a single lifetime:" "What is said as 'a single lifetime' is, once an unenlightened person raises faith, at the beginning of the ten stages, the person accords with no-life. In other words, this is a single lifetime based on the wisdom of the realm of reality not based on one's karma" (云一生者。從凡夫地起信之後。十住初心契無生也。即任法界智生非業生也。 T36n1739p768c). This is the ultimate level of demonstrating the simultaneity of cause and effect (T36n1739p761a), which Li considers to be the very teaching of Huayan Buddhism and also of the Buddha's teachings at their core.

Second, the *dharma* teachers that Sudhana encounters in his journey represent diverse existence in the phenomenal world. As the Huayan fourfold world view succinctly indicates, the basic tenet of Huayan Buddhism claims that each phenomenon represents the entirety of noumena and that the noumena are represented only through phenomena. The diversity in the composition of teachers that Sudhana meets during his journey represents the diversity of the phenomenal world. Even though he meets only fifty-three teachers and the number symbolically represents the fifty-three stages of the bodhisattva practice, the number also can be understood as a symbolic presentation of the infinite diversity in phenomenal appearances.

Third, Sudhana and his pilgrimage represent for Li the practical dimension of Huayan teaching. As he states, “If one finds only *dharma* teachings in a scripture, that might indicate that there is nobody who practices that teaching. Hence, the scripture makes Sudhana go to visit each *dharma* friend one by one. ... [The scripture] made Sudhana go through each stage so that those who wish to learn [from the scripture] make no mistake” (經中但有法門。未有人求學者故。令善財詢友一一以行行之。... 故令善財以行行之。令使後學無滯。 T36n1739p751c). For Li, Sudhana’s pilgrimage is the very happening of the teaching of Huayan Buddhism, not just a discussion of the Huayan teaching.

In his analysis of the structure of the *Huayan jing* (of sixty-fascicles in thirty-four chapters), Fazang divided the scripture into the two sections of the “Introduction” (*xufen* 序分) and “Main body” (*zhengzong fen* 正宗分). Chapter one is assigned to the “Introduction,” and the rest of the *sūtra* (i.e., from chapter two to chapter thirty-four) is assigned to the “Main body.”<sup>25</sup> The thirty-three chapters of the main body are further divided into five stages of causalities: (1) faith in causality (*suoxin yinguo* 所信因果); (2) different causality (*chabie yinguo* 差別因果); (3) equal causality (*pingdeng yinguo* 平等因果); (4) practicing causality (*chengxing yinguo* 成行因果); and (5) realization of causality (*zheng ru yinguo* 證入因果).<sup>26</sup> Fazang assigns the “Entering the Realm of Reality” chapter to the stage of the “realization of causality.” That is, for Fazang, Sudhana’s pilgrimage represents only the realization of the Buddhist teaching whereas faith in causality appears in the chapter on Vairocana (chapter 2, 毘盧遮那品); different causality appears in the phenomenal world diversely discussed in the chapters from three to thirty; equal causality is represented in the chapter on the conduct of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva (chapter 31, 普賢菩薩行品) and the chapter on the “Nature-Origination of the Tathāgata, the Jewel King” (chapter 32, 寶王如來性起品) and practicing causality appears in the chapter “Leaving the Secular World.” (chapter 33, 離世間品). For Li Tongxuan, Sudhana’s pilgrimage itself represents

<sup>25</sup> Fazang, T35n1733p125a.

<sup>26</sup> Lim 2008: 58.

the combinations of all the aspects of causality as they actually take place in the world through the reality of Sudhana's pilgrimage.

As Li discusses Sudhana and the "Entering the Realm of Reality" chapter, he constantly compares Sudhana with the dragon girl who appears in the *Lotus Sūtra*. Given the importance of "Entering the Realm of Reality" and Sudhana in Li's Huayan Buddhism, one cannot but think that the story of the dragon girl has a special meaning to Li Tongxuan. The story of the dragon girl in the *Lotus Sūtra* has recently attracted scholars' attention, mostly in the context of the 'gender trouble' in the Buddhist tradition.<sup>27</sup> Whether the body-transformation discourse of Mahāyāna Buddhism, including that of the dragon girl, supports the idea that women can attain buddhahood has been at the center of scholars' interpretation of the Devadatta chapter of the *Lotus Sūtra* in which the dragon girl appears. As expected, gender was not within the scope of Li's interest in the dragon girl's story, but his repeated mentioning of the dragon girl in comparison with the youth Sudhana suggests the importance of this story in Li's philosophical paradigm. In his tenfold doctrinal classification, the *Lotus Sūtra* is located at the seventh level, which comes after the *Vimalakīrtisūtra* and before the *Great Collection Scripture*, and after the latter comes the *Nirvāṇasūtra*. Though the *Nirvāṇasūtra* is located at the ninth stage, just before *Huayan jing*, Li pays more attention to the *Lotus Sūtra*, more specifically to the story of the dragon girl. For Li, the core teaching and thus the importance of the *Nirvāṇasūtra* is to confirm that the Buddha-nature exists in all sentient beings. However, for Li, the confirmation of the existence of the Buddha-nature is not enough; what needs to be confirmed is the happening of this Buddha-nature, which Li sees taking place in the dragon girl in the *Lotus Sūtra* and Sudhana in the *Huayan jing*.

In the *Lotus Sūtra*, the dragon girl is a figure who combines all of the seemingly unfavorable conditions for enlightenment: she is a female; she is a child of only eight years of age; and she is a sub-human creature. The *sūtra* employs these features to promote the efficacy of the *Lotus Sūtra* for attaining sudden enlightenment. Asked

---

<sup>27</sup> For example, see Peach 2002; Levering 2002.

about a case that proves the effectiveness of the teaching given in the *Lotus Sūtra*, Mañjuśrī presents the story of the dragon girl and states that “within a moment, she aspired to become awakened and reached the stage of never backsliding” (於剎那頃發菩提心, 得不退轉).<sup>28</sup> Hearing this story of the marvelous enlightenment of the dragon girl, Bodhisattva Wisdom Accumulation, the dialoguer of Mañjuśrī, expresses his doubts about the possibility that enlightenment can take place in such a short time, as various scriptures mention the *kalpas* of time that Tathāgata had to go through before attaining enlightenment. At that moment, the dragon girl herself makes a sudden appearance and confirms through a *gāthā* that she has attained enlightenment. Having heard the dragon girl’s confirmation of her achievement, Śariputra, the wise disciple of the Buddha, expresses his doubts. Śariputra says, “You state that in no length of time you attained the supreme way. This thing is hard to believe. Wherefore? The body of a woman is filthy and not a vessel of the law. How can she attain supreme *bodhi*? The Buddha-way is so vast that only after passing through innumerable *kalpas*, enduring hardship, accumulating good works, and perfectly practicing the perfections can it be accomplished” (汝謂不久得無上道, 是事難信。所以者何? 女身垢穢, 非是法器, 云何能得無上菩提。佛道懸曠, 經無量劫勤苦積行, 具修諸度, 然後乃成).<sup>29</sup> Though being credited as the first in wisdom among the Buddha’s disciples, Śariputra is an arhat who follows the gradual teaching. In Śariputra’s view, people of one gender have the capacity to attain enlightenment, whereas those of the other gender do not, and enlightenment cannot but be a gradual process that requires *kalpas* of time to complete. According to Li Tongxuan, they are exactly what the dragon girl’s story is not. Li states,

That the dragon girl is only eight years old indicates that her knowledge is attained only in this lifetime, but not that which was accumulated in previous lives; that she was a sub-human creature means that she has not accumulated practice in the past. This indicates that the principle of the law that she believes in this life is straightforward

<sup>28</sup> *Miaofa lianhua jing*, T9n262p35b. English translation by Reeves 2008: 251. See also Katō et al. 1975: 212.

<sup>29</sup> T9n262p35c; English translation by Katō et al. 1975: 213.

and without stagnation, that the essence of the realm of reality is not reaped through three worlds, but that when one thought corresponds to truth, then the discrimination of the three worlds is all exhausted. Wisdom neither appears nor disappears, which is the fruition of the Buddha.

言龍女年始八歲者. 表今生成始學非舊學故. 畜生女者. 明非過去積修. 此明此生信法門理直無滯故. 法界體性非三世收. 一念應真三世情盡. 智無出沒即佛果故. (T36n1739p768b–c)

For Li, the dragon girl is the very manifestation of the absolute suddenness of enlightenment. The dragon girl's enlightenment, for Li, is the enlightenment of a moment (*chana chengfo* 刹那成佛). Both Sudhana's enlightenment in a single lifetime and the dragon girl's enlightenment in a moment demonstrate the subitist nature of enlightenment, which is the very teaching of the vehicle of Huayan Buddhism for Li Tongxuan. As he says, "In the *sūtra* is said that at the initial arousal of the mind to practice bodhisattva path at the first level of the ten abodes, one already attains the right awakening. ... Also it is said that even with a trivial skillful means, one suddenly attains enlightenment. Sudhana and the dragon girl are such people" (為此經說十住初心初發心時便成正覺. ... 經云. 以小方便疾得菩提. 如善財龍女等. 其人也. T36n1739p732a). Both the one moment of the dragon girl's enlightenment and the single lifetime of Sudhana's enlightenment challenge the common-sense concept of time and introduce Li's vision of non-temporality. The moment (*chana* 刹那) is the shortest measure of time in Buddhism. The moment, as the shortest measure, does not imply actual length or duration of time; instead, it indicates the non-temporality that Li claims as the essence of Buddhist enlightenment. This is the world of absolute non-dualism, in which cause and effect; the past, the present, and the future; and the phenomena and the noumena, are intermingled.

Even though both Sudhana and the dragon girl represent the actualization of sudden enlightenment, for Li, there exist also significant differences between the two, which from a Huayanist perspective reveal the limitations of the teachings of the *Lotus Sūtra*. In order to elaborate on this issue, let us read the paragraphs in which the dragon girl demonstrates her enlightenment and the

gathered assembly responds to the situation. As Śariputra expresses his doubts about the dragon girl's attainment of awakening, the dragon girl offers a pearl to the Buddha which the World Honored One accepted. To doubtful Śariputra, the dragon girl tells that she can prove her enlightenment quicker than the way she offered the pearl to the Buddha. Then the scripture describes:

At the moment, the entire congregation saw the dragon's daughter suddenly transformed into a male, perfect in bodhisattva-deeds, who instantly *went to the world Spotless in the southern quarter*, where [she] sat on a precious lotus flower, attaining perfect enlightenment, ...

The *sahā*-world of bodhisattvas, śravakas, the eight groups of gods and dragons, and human and nonhuman beings, all *from afar beholding the dragon's daughter become a buddha* and universally preach the law to gods, men, [and others] among that congregation, all rejoiced greatly and made *reverent salutation from afar*.<sup>30</sup> ...

Three thousand living beings in this world reached the stage of never backsliding, while three thousand living beings aspired to become awakened and obtained assurance of doing so.

Accumulated Wisdom Bodhisattva and Śariputra and the whole congregation *silently believed and accepted this*.<sup>31</sup>

當時眾會，皆見龍女忽然之間變成男子，具菩薩行，即往南方無垢世界，坐寶蓮華，成等正覺。...

爾時娑婆世界，菩薩，聲聞，天龍八部，人與非人，皆遙見彼龍女成佛，普為時會人天說法，心大歡喜，悉遙敬禮。...

三千眾生住不退地，三千眾生發菩提心而得受記。智積菩薩及舍利弗，一切眾會，默然信受。

In discussing the difference between the *Huayan jing* and the *Lotus Sūtra* and those between the cases of Sudhana and of the dragon girl, Li relies heavily on these three passages. He contends that, first, there exists a difference between the story of the dragon girl and of Sudhana in that the former changed her body, whereas the

<sup>30</sup> T9n262p35c; English translation by Katō et al. 1975: 214, emphasis mine.

<sup>31</sup> T9n262p7a–b; English translation by Reeves 2008: 83–84. Also see Katō et al. 1975: 60.

latter did not. For Li, the transformation of the body indicates a separation between two forms of bodies: the body before the transformation and the body after the transformation. From the perspective of a Huayanist to whom all and any phenomenal reality represents the entirety of the noumena, the fact that the change of one's body can have any meaning indicates that those who believe this vision are still attached to the teachings of the Three Vehicles, which embraces the gradualist view. Li thus asks, "One should know that the essence of the ten thousand *dharma*s are originally suchness. How is then a transformation possible at all?" (當知萬法本自體如。有何可轉。 T36n1739p726b). He adds:

In the "Entering the Realm of Reality" chapter of the *Huayan jing*, Sudhana has fifty-three teachers who include Mañjuśrī, Samantabhadra, monks, a nun, householders, boys, female lay practitioners, a girl, a sage, and a heretic. Each of them in his or her own way is equipped with bodhisattva practice and the Buddhist teachings. These teachers in appearance have different bodies, following [the capacities] of the sentient beings, but they do not talk about the change of their bodies. If one sees through *dharma* eyes, there is no secular [phenomenon] that is not truth; if one sees through physical eyes of the secular world, there is no truth that is not secular.

如華嚴經入法界品中。善財童子善知識。文殊普賢比丘比丘尼長者童子優婆夷童女仙人外道五十三人。各各自具菩薩行自具佛法。隨諸眾生見身不同。不云有轉。若以法眼觀。無俗不真。若以世間肉眼觀。無真不俗。(T36n1739p726b)

Second, the dragon girl moves to the land of the southern region immediately after her awakening, whereas Sudhana does not. As in the case of the difference between the bodies before and after the transformation, making a distinction between the regions where the enlightened beings reside and where the non-enlightened stay indicates for Li that "there exists a gap between 'self' and 'other' and between 'this' and 'that'" (自他彼此猶隔 T36n1739p726c), which in turn is an indication of the Three Vehicles.

Third, that the gathered assembly was "from afar beholding the dragon's daughter become a Buddha" and "made reverent salutation from afar" again indicates a gap between the subject and the object: those who have attained enlightenment and those who have not.

One might wonder at this point whether Li Tongxuan did a fair job in his evaluation of the *Lotus Sūtra*, judging the entire scripture almost exclusively based on this one incidence of the dragon girl's story. From the beginning of the *Exposition on the Huayan jing*, Li Tongxuan makes clear the superiority of the *Huayan Sūtra* over other scriptures, including the *Lotus Sūtra*. Despite that, one cannot but notice that the *Lotus Sūtra* has a special attraction for Li. Most of the other scriptures in his tenfold doctrinal classification are mentioned only once when he introduces his classification at the beginning of the *Exposition*. But Li constantly revisits the *Lotus Sūtra* and especially the dragon girl's story in his exposition. Why did he then place the *Lotus Sūtra* at the seventh level instead of the ninth level, given his interest in the scripture, and why did he constantly revisit the story of the dragon girl, when it could be sufficient to make his points on the dragon girl with one mentioning of it?

### **3. The Lotus Sūtra and Li Tongxuan's Huayan Buddhism: one vehicle, skillful means, and the sudden enlightenment**

In the Mahāyāna Buddhist literature, the *Lotus Sūtra* carries rather unambiguous messages. By introducing the idea of the skillful means, the scripture promotes the concept of the One Vehicle, and the One Vehicle promotes its importance by encompassing the existing Three Vehicles instead of condemning the earlier practice of the two vehicles of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas. Before the *Lotus Sūtra*, śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas were considered having had no intention of practicing the bodhisattva path. In the *Lotus Sūtra*, however, they are interpreted as being a stage or a skillful means to reach the teachings of the Buddha together with the bodhisattvas. By embracing earlier vehicles as skillful means, the *Lotus Sūtra* promotes the One Vehicle, or the Buddha Vehicle, as the truest way of practicing Buddhism. In the chapter on the "Skillful Means" in the *Lotus Sūtra*, the Buddha emphasizes to Śariputra that he teaches only the One-Buddha Vehicle and that all the teachings that existed before were skillful means to lead the sentient beings to the truth of the Buddhist teaching. The Buddha states to Śariputra:



Śariputra, the *tathāgatas* teach the *dharma* for the sake of living beings only by means of the One Buddha-Vehicle. There are no other vehicles – no second or third vehicle. Śariputra, the teachings of the buddhas throughout the universe are all like this. Śariputra, buddhas of the past, through an innumerable variety of skillful means, causal explanations, parables, and other kinds of expression, have preached the *dharma* for the sake of living beings. These teachings have all been for the sake of the One Buddha-Vehicle, so that all living things, having heard the *dharma* from a buddha, might finally gain complete wisdom.

舍利弗！如來但以一佛乘故，為眾生說法，無有餘乘，若二，若三。舍利弗！一切十方諸佛，法亦如是。舍利弗！過去諸佛，以無量無數方便，種種因緣，譬喻言辭，而為眾生演說諸法，是法皆為一佛乘故。是諸眾生，從諸佛聞法，究竟皆得一切種智。<sup>32</sup>

Śariputra, this is so that they might attain the complete wisdom of the One Buddha-Vehicle. Śariputra, in the entire universe, there are not even two such vehicles, much less three!

舍利弗！如此皆為得一佛乘，一切種智。舍利弗！十方世界中，尚無二乘，何況有三。<sup>33</sup>

Śariputra, all of you should believe, understand, and embrace the words of the Buddha with all your hearts, for in the words of the buddhas, the *tathāgatas*, there is nothing empty or false. There are no other vehicles. There is only the One Buddha-Vehicle.

舍利弗！汝等當一心信解受持佛語。諸佛如來言無虛妄，無有餘乘，唯一佛乘。<sup>34</sup>

I have cited rather extensively in order to demonstrate how persistent the Buddha is presented in his emphasis on the importance of the teachings of the One Vehicle. In this context, at least three questions need clarification. First, what is the relationship between the Three Vehicles and the One Vehicle? This question leads to the identity of the One Vehicle as it is preached in the *Lotus Sūtra*.

<sup>32</sup> T9n262p7a–b; English translation by Reeves 2008: 83–84, slightly modified. Also see Katō et al. 1975: 60.

<sup>33</sup> T9n262p7b; English translation by Reeves 2008: 84. Also see Katō et al. 1975: 61.

<sup>34</sup> T9n262p7c; English translation by Reeves 2008: 85. Also see Katō et al. 1975: 62.

Second, how is this related to the skillful means, and how does one understand the skillful means in relation to the truth it reveals? And third, how are these two issues related to the sudden enlightenment that is declared in the case of the dragon girl?

In the above passages, it seems clear that the Buddha in the *Lotus Sūtra* employs the concept of the One Vehicle as an inclusive, rather than exclusive, method in the teachings of the Buddha. That is, the One Vehicle does not exclude the existing vehicles, but is employed to claim that all the existing teachings are branches of one body. And the Buddha further instructs Śariputra that, in the time of disturbances, when the level of sentient beings is low, the Buddhas create various ways to teach sentient beings; and thus “with their powers of skillful means, the buddhas have distinguished three ways within the One Buddha-Vehicle” (諸佛以方便力, 於一佛乘分別說三).<sup>35</sup> The all-inclusiveness of the One Vehicle of the *Lotus Sūtra*, from the perspective of Li Tongxuan, is one of the major distinctions between the teachings of the *Lotus Sūtra* and of the *Huayan jing*. As is known, the *Lotus Sūtra* is not the only Mahāyāna scripture that underlines the idea of the One Vehicle, or the Buddha Vehicle. From Zhiyan, to Fazang, and Li Tongxuan, Chinese Huayanists also claim that Huayan Buddhism teaches the One Vehicle. However, Huayanists tend to distinguish two types of the One Vehicle; and for Li, this distinction is crucial in evaluating the nature of the Buddhist teaching of the One Vehicle.

Fazang begins his *Essay on the Five Teachings* by distinguishing the two types of the One Vehicle as he establishes the concept of the One Vehicle. Fazang writes: “The first section clarifies the establishment of the One Vehicle; one can analyze the teachings of the One Vehicle into two approaches: the first is the Distinct Teaching [of the One Vehicle] (*biejiao* 別教), and the second, the Unifying Teaching [of the One Vehicle] (*tongjiao* 同教)” (初明建立一乘者。然此一乘教義分齊。開為二門。一別教。二同教).<sup>36</sup> It is

<sup>35</sup> T9n262p7b; English translation by Reeves 2008: 85.

<sup>36</sup> T45n1866p477a; *biejiao yisheng*, 別教一乘 *biejiao*, 別教 and *tongjiao yisheng*, 同教一乘 and *tongjiao* 同教 have been variously translated as the same teaching of the One Vehicle, the distinct teaching of the One Vehicle,

believed that Zhiyan was the first who introduced this distinction into the doctrinal classification of Huayan Buddhism.<sup>37</sup> Zhiyan understands that the Distinct One Vehicle includes the Unifying One Vehicle, and this could be interpreted as a way to demonstrate the nature of Huayan Buddhism as the One Vehicle of round teaching (*wuanjiao yi sheng* 圓教一乘).<sup>38</sup> that is, a round teaching cannot be exclusive. Fazang takes the same position. Even though he distinguishes the Distinct One Vehicle from the Unifying One Vehicle, identifying the *Lotus Sūtra* with the latter and the *Huayan jing* with the former, he takes the position that the Unifying One Vehicle is encompassed in the Distinct One Vehicle. Li Tongxuan takes a clearly different position from Zhiyan and Fazang with regard to the two types of the One Vehicle. He is adamant in claiming that the teachings of the *Huayan jing* are absolutely different from those of the Three Vehicles, and that the Distinct One Vehicle and the Unifying One Vehicle are clearly different. Li contends that even though both the *Lotus Sūtra* and the *Huayan jing* share the name, the One Vehicle, there do exist differences. Li thus argues:

The *Lotus Sūtra* is a teaching which employs the skillful means to enter into truth. This is the case because this *sūtra* leads people of the Three Vehicles to return to the true teachings of the One Vehicle. Like leading multiple streams into the great ocean, it encompasses the Three Vehicles and return them to the one origin. Great teachers in the past like *dharma* teachers encompassed all teachings and made shared teachings. This is because the people of the One Vehicle and of the Three Vehicles listened to the *dharma* all together. The *Huayan jing* represents the Distinct One Vehicle. That is because the people of the One Vehicle [of the *Huayan jing*] do not listen to the *dharma* together with the people of the Three Vehicles ... The *Lotus Sūtra* leads those who have the capacity for the skillful means to return to the truth. The *Huayan jing* is for those with a great capacity who

---

differentiating teaching, the unifying teaching (DDB); Francis Cook translated *biejiao* 別教 and *tongjiao* 同教 into “the distinct doctrine” and “the common doctrine” (Cook 1970: 118). In this essay I will use the Distinct One Vehicle for both *biejiao yisheng* and *biejiao* and the Unifying One Vehicle for both *tongjiao yisheng* and *tongjiao*.

<sup>37</sup> Kyehwan 1996: 233.

<sup>38</sup> See Kyehwan 1996: 232–235.

are capable of sudden [enlightenment] through a direct acceptance [of teachings or of truth].

法華經會權入實為宗者，此經引彼三乘之人，歸一乘實教故。引眾流而歸大海，攝三乘而還一源，藏法師等前諸大德，會為共教。一乘為三乘同聞法故。華嚴經為別教，一乘為不與三乘同聞故。... 華經引權器以歸真。華嚴者頓大根而直受。(T36n1739p725a)

The Unifying One Vehicle is characterized by gradual teaching, whereas the Distinct One Vehicle of the *Huayan jing* demonstrates the subitism of enlightenment. Considering the dragon girl's case in light of the Unifying One Vehicle, Li's constant reference to the dragon girl's story can be interpreted as his claim that in the narrative of the *Lotus Sūtra*, inner conflicts exist: that is, the ideas of the Unifying One Vehicle and the skillful means support the gradualism of the Three Vehicles, whereas through the dragon girl's story, the scripture presents its teaching as being subitist.<sup>39</sup>

As we noted, throughout the chapter on the "Skillful Means," the Buddha emphasizes the importance of the teaching of the One Vehicle and his desire to share this teaching with the sentient beings so that he can lead them to the world of the Buddha's knowledge and wisdom. However he does not clearly articulate the doctrinal ground of why the Three Vehicles are now to be subsumed by the One Vehicle. Only in passing, in the closing *gāthā*, the Buddha mentions the doctrinal ground of the One Vehicle as follows:

<sup>39</sup> During the discussion after the presentation of the earlier version of this essay at the International *Lotus Sūtra* Seminar (January 29, 2010), Paul Groner proposed a potential influence of Li Tongxuan on Saichō 最澄 (767–822), the founder of the Japanese Tendai School. Groner's proposal is based on the following reasoning: a core of Saichō's Buddhism is the idea that one attains buddhahood in this lifetime in this body (*sokushin jōbutsu* 即身成佛). Given that the *Lotus Sūtra* is the foundational text of Saichō's Tendai thought, there is a possibility that Saichō was aware of Li Tongxuan's emphasis on the importance of the dragon girl's story in the *Lotus Sūtra* and Li's idea of attaining buddhahood in this lifetime. The relationship between Saichō's idea of *sokushin jōbutsu* and Li Tongxuan's emphasis on the dragon girl's and Sudhana's pilgrimage has yet to be fully explored. For Paul Groner's discussion of Saichō's idea of attainment of buddhahood in this body, see Groner 1989 and 2000.

Though buddhas in ages to come,  
 May teach millions and millions,  
 Of countless gateways to the *dharmā*,  
 This will actually be for the sake of the One Vehicle.  
 The buddhas, the most honored of people,  
 Know that nothing exists independently,  
 And that buddha-seeds arise interdependently,  
 This is why they teach the One Vehicle.

未來世諸佛，雖說百千億，  
 無數諸法門，其實為一乘。  
 諸佛兩足尊，知法常無性，  
 佛種從緣起，是故說一乘。<sup>40</sup>

In the world of dependent co-arising, in which nothing has its own independent essence, the idea of separating those who can attain enlightenment and those who cannot is not sustainable. The *Innumerable Meanings Sūtra* (*Wuliangyi jing* 無量義經), which is considered to be the introduction to the *Lotus Sūtra* when the scripture is read in the tripartite series known as the three-part Lotus, better explains the doctrinal ground for the claims of the One Vehicle and the skillful means. In the *Innumerable Meanings Sūtra*, the Buddha is asked by the Bodhisattva-Mahāsattva Great Adornment about what teaching one should practice in order to attain enlightenment quickly. The Buddha's answer is rather encouraging. In response, the Buddha says that one needs to perfect only "one teaching" (*yifamen* 一法門). "What is it called? (是法門者，號字何等)" the Bodhisattva Great Adornment asks. The Buddha responds: "It is called the *Innumerable Meanings Sūtra* (是一法門，名為無量義)."<sup>41</sup> Based on the content, one knows that by the "one teaching," the Buddha was here referring to the teaching given in the *Innumerable Meanings Sūtra*. But soon, the Buddha's discourse makes it possible to change the meaning of the "one teaching" from that of the *Innumerable Meanings Sūtra* to the "one law," the "one truth" (*yifa* 一法). In order to attain enlightenment, one needs to master only the one law or the one truth, but this one law has innu-

<sup>40</sup> T9n262p9b; English translation by Reeves 2008: 95.

<sup>41</sup> *Wuliangyi jing*, T9n276p385c.

merable meanings. The structure of the one law and innumerable meanings fits well with the all-inclusive One Vehicle of the *Lotus Sūtra* and various skillful means that were taught before the declaration of the One Vehicle. The Buddha explains: “The innumerable meanings are produced based on the one law. This one law is formless. Such formless is non-form and is not a form. Being not form and formless, it is called the true form” (無量義者, 從一法生, 其一法者, 即無相也。如是無相, 無相不相, 不相無相, 名為實相).<sup>42</sup> The Buddha explains the relationship between his teachings of the past forty years and the ultimate one truth that is revealed in the *Innumerable Meanings Sūtra* by introducing the concept of the skillful means. That is, after he had attained enlightenment, he taught the Four Noble Truths for śrāvakas, then the Twelve Members of Dependent Arising for pratyekabuddhas, and then the twelve Mahāyāna scriptures for bodhisattvas; but they were all skillful means. These different teachings were given, the Buddha tells Bodhisattva Great Adornment, because the capacities of the sentient beings are all different. However, the Buddha confirms with Bodhisattva Great Adornment that the teachings he gives as the ultimatum in the *Innumerable Meanings Sūtra* are the same teachings that were delivered through various skillful means.

Likewise, in the *Lotus Sūtra*, the Buddha states that billions of different teachings all lead to the One Vehicle, because things do not have self-nature. Does this mean that all the billion teachings are themselves truth, or is there only one truth which is the One Vehicle? This leads us to the question of the truth-claim of the skillful means. The Buddha has repeatedly emphasized that the skillful means were employed by the buddhas because sentient beings fail to understand the profound teachings of the buddhas. The skillful means in this case are a provisional method to “lead” the sentient beings to the truth. And this was also the way Li Tongxuan understood the *Lotus Sūtra* when he defined the teachings of the scripture as “employing the skillful means to lead sentient beings to the truth” or “leading through skillful means to return to the truth” (T36n1739p725a). In this case, the skillful means themselves

---

<sup>42</sup> *Wuliangyi jing*, T9n276p385c.

are not truth; they are a means leading to the truth, and thus the dualism of truth and non-truth becomes the ground of this reasoning. How does this dualist approach to the truth claim accord with the non-existence of the self-nature as the ground of the teaching of the One Vehicle?

In the *Innumerable Meanings Sūtra*, the Buddha uses a simile of water to demonstrate the various skillful means he has employed and their relationship to the truth. Water in a pond, in a wall, in a stream, or in the ocean all have the same characteristics of water; likewise, his teachings about suffering, emptiness, impermanence, and non-self were there in all of his earlier teachings. However, he also makes it clear that a pond is not a wall, a wall is not a stream, and a stream is not the ocean. The various teachings provided using skillful means all function the same way, leading the sentient being toward awakening, but the first of his forty years of teachings through *dharma* talks, those given in the middle period, and the final teaching that is provided in the *Innumerable Meanings Sūtra* are not the same. This is a way for the Buddha to claim the superiority of the One Vehicle and at the same time to encompass all the earlier teachings as the skillful means leading to this final revelation of the truth. Does this mean that skillful means are themselves truth or are they just a medium to carry the truth? The Buddha seems to claim the latter, and Li's understanding of the *Lotus Sūtra* is in accord with that belief.

What then is the ultimate promise of the *Lotus Sūtra* and of the *Innumerable Meanings Sūtra*? If what the Buddha teaches through the One Vehicle has already been taught through various skillful means, why is the One Vehicle needed? Why should the One Vehicle be superior to others? In what sense is it the 'truth' whereas others are all simply skillful means? Here one can recall the question asked by Bodhisattva-Mahāsattva Great Adornment to the Buddha in the *Innumerable Meanings Sūtra*: "If bodhisattvas and *mahāsattvas* would like to *quickly* attain the supreme and perfect enlightenment, what teachings should they practice?" (菩薩摩訶薩欲得疾成阿耨多羅三藐三菩提, 應當修行何等法門?).<sup>43</sup> Bodhisattva

<sup>43</sup> *Wuliangyi jing*, T9n276p385c, emphasis mine.

Great Adornment's concern was not just about attaining enlightenment but attaining it "quickly." The Buddha's answer that they need to practice just "one law" well corresponds to the core of the question. Hence, the sudden enlightenment claim is the superior quality of this ultimate teaching in comparison to all the earlier teachings that require gradual practice.

The claims about the all-inclusive One Vehicle and the skillful means make it possible for the scripture to maintain that universal salvation exists, another core theme of the *Lotus Sūtra*. And this assertion about universal salvation in the *Lotus Sūtra* was done through the prophecy that the Buddha bestowed on all the gathered assembly. The Buddha pronounces the future attainment of the buddhahood for Śariputra, who was an arhat, and then to Buddha's disciples, including Subhuti and Mahākāśyapa, then to five hundred of the Buddha's disciples, followed by the lay practitioners, and eventually to women and *icchantikas*. The process of bestowing prophecies concerning future salvation constitutes the main structure of the scripture. How does this gradualism concur with the subitist claim of the *Innumerable Meanings Sūtra* and the dragon girl's story? If an eight-year-old dragon girl can "in a moment" attain enlightenment, why would all others need *kalpas* to attain their awakening? Li's evaluation of the *Lotus Sūtra* addresses this very issue.

Li Tongxuan's Huayan Buddhism is characterized by his claim that there exists not even an infinitesimal difference between the Buddha and the sentient being. This idea is combined with two other main Huayan tenets: first, each and every phenomenon represents the entirety of the noumenon; second, the moment of the arousal of the mind to practice the bodhisattva path is the moment one attains perfect enlightenment. Combining the three aspects, Li's Huayan Buddhism takes the position of absolute subitism and non-dualism. As an extension of his Huayan thought, Li defines the One Vehicle through absolute non-dualism in terms of a temporal, spatial, and conceptual understanding of beings and existence. Li posits the following: (1) the past, present, and future co-exist in one moment, which negates any gradualist understanding of enlightenment; (2) the *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa*, the secular and the Buddha



land, cannot be separated, and there is no distinction among them; and (3) any and all dualism between the sentient being and the Buddha are to be negated. Li seems to have wished to understand the core of the *Lotus Sūtra* in accordance with the above points that are the basis of his Huayan thought. He repeatedly returns to the story of the dragon girl because, for Li, her case is an absolute manifestation of the above teachings of the One Vehicle as is the case of Sudhana and his pilgrimage in the *Huayan jing*. However, he also noted that the main argument of the *Lotus Sūtra* does not keep up with the subitism demonstrated by the dragon girl's enlightenment. For Li, the scripture reveals a gap between the dragon girl's sudden enlightenment and what happens after her enlightenment (as we discussed earlier), on the one hand, and on the other, between the dragon girl's sudden enlightenment and other claims of the scripture, especially in the teachings of the Unifying One Vehicle, the skillful means, and bestowal of prophecy for awakening to be actualized in the *kalpas* to come. From Li's perspective, the *Lotus Sūtra* does not teach One Vehicle but demonstrates a path that moves from the Three Vehicles to the One Vehicle, and this is why for Li the Distinct One Vehicle of the *Huayan jing* and the Unifying One Vehicle of the *Lotus Sūtra* cannot be combined. The latter is an extension of the Three Vehicles and thus allows the gradual teaching. The teachings of the *Lotus Sūtra* support the gradual paradigm rather than the sudden enlightenment.

In discussing the *Lotus Sūtra* in his tenfold taxonomy, Li offers ten aspects in which the *Lotus Sūtra* is distinguished from the *Huayan jing* and two points that he believes the *Lotus Sūtra* and the *Huayan jing* share. The ten points are related to the gradual aspects of the *Lotus Sūtra* and thus the dualism involved in it, and the two shared aspects are related to the subitist teaching of the *Lotus Sūtra*. The two points can be summarized as follows: 1. In both the *Lotus Sūtra* and the *Huayan jing* "Through the Tathāgata Vehicle, one enters directly into the place of enlightenment. The Tathāgata Vehicle signifies the One Vehicle" (乘如來乘直至道場。如來乘者，即一乘也。 T36n1739p727a); 2. The dragon girl attains enlightenment in a moment, which is the same as the enlightenment of Sudhana (T36n1739p727b). It is true that Li Tongxuan's reading

of the *Lotus Sūtra* is undeniably based on his Huayan Buddhism, which is also visibly different from the thoughts of the ‘orthodox’ thinkers of Chinese Huayan Buddhism. However, in his analysis of the *Lotus Sūtra* based on his own vision of the ultimate teaching, which for Li is Huayan Buddhism, Li Tongxuan brings our attention to the internal contradiction among different claims made in the scripture.

### Primary sources and abbreviations

- Fazang 法藏. *Huayan jing tanxuan ji* 華嚴經探玄記. T35n1733p107a–492b.  
 Fazang 法藏. *Huayan wujiao zhang* 華嚴五教章. T45n1866p477a–509a.  
*Huayan jing – Dafangguang fo huayan jing* 大方廣佛華嚴經. T10n279p1b–444c.  
 Li Tongxuan 李通玄. *Xin Huayan jing lun* 新華嚴經論. T36n1739p721–1007.  
 Li zhangzhe shiji 李長者事跡. X4n225p832a–833a.  
*Miaofa lianhua jing* 妙法蓮花經. T9n262p1a–62c.  
 T – *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* 大正新修大藏經. Tokyo: Taishō issaikyō kankokai 1924–32.  
 Wōnhyo 元曉. *Pōphwa chongyo* 法華宗要. *Han’guk Pulgyo Chōnsō* 韓國佛教全書. Seoul: Tongguk taehakkyo ch’ulp’anbu 1979, vol. 1, pp. 487c–494c.  
*Wuliangyi jing* 無量義經. T9n276p383b–389b.  
 X – *Xuzangjing* 續藏經. Tokyo: Kokusho Kankokai 1975–1989.  
 Zhaoming 照明. *Huayan jing jueyi lun xu* 華嚴經決疑論序. T36n1741p1011c.  
 Zhiyan 智儼. *Huayan kongmu zhang* 華嚴孔目章. T45n1870p536a–589b.  
 Zhiyan 智儼. *Souxuan ji* 搜玄記. T35n1732p13b–106b.

### Secondary sources

- Buswell, Robert E., Jr., trans. 1983. *The Korean Approach to Zen: Collected Works of Chinul*. Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press.  
 Chang, Garma C. C. 1971. *The Buddhist Teaching of Totality: The Philosophy of Hwa Yen Buddhism*. University Park and London: The Pennsylvania State University Press.  
 Chen Jinhua 1999. *Making and Remaking History: A Study of Tiantai Sectarian Historiography*. Tokyo: Tokyo International Institute for Buddhist Studies of the International College for Advanced Buddhist Studies.

- Cleary, Thomas, trans. 1993. *The Flower Ornament Scripture: A Translation of the Avataṃsaka Sutra*. Boston & London: Shambhala.
- Cook, Francis H. 1970. *Fa-tsang's Treatise on the Five Doctrines: An Annotated Translation*. Ph. D. dissertation. University of Wisconsin.
- 1977. *Hua-yen Buddhism: The Jewel Net of Indra*. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press.
- Gimello, Robert M. 1983. "Li T'ung-hsüan and the practical dimensions of Hua-yen," in Robert M. Gimello and Peter N. Gregory, eds. *Studies in Ch'an and Hua-yen*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, pp. 321–389.
- Groner, Paul 1989. "The Lotus Sutra and Saichō's interpretation of the realization of buddhahood with this very body," in Tanabe and Tanabe 1989, pp. 53–74.
- 2000. *Saichō: The Establishment of the Japanese Tendai School*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Haeju sunim 海住스님 1999. *Hawōm ūi segye 화엄의 세계 (The world of Huayan)*. Seoul: Minjoksa.
- Hardacre, Helen 1989. "The Lotus Sūtra in modern Japan," in Tanabe and Tanabe 1989, pp. 209–224.
- Inaoka Chigen 稲岡智賢 1981. "Ri Tsūgen no denki ni tsuite" 李通玄の伝記について (On Li Tongxuan's biographies). *Bukkyōgaku seminā 仏教学セミナー* 34, pp. 24–39.
- 1985. "Ri Tsūgen no Hokke kyō kan" 李通玄の法華経観 (On Li Tongxuan's thoughts on the Lotus Sūtra). *Indogaku bukkyōgaku kenkyū* 34/1 pp. 258–263.
- Kamata Shigeo 鎌田茂雄 1988. *Kegon no shisō 華嚴の思想 (Huayan thought)*. Tokyo: Kōdansha.
- Katō, Bunnō, Yoshirō Tamura, and Kōurō Miyasaka, trans. 1975. *The Three-fold Lotus Sutra*. Tokyo: Kosei Publishing Co.
- Kyehwan 戒環 1996. *Chungguk Hwaōm sasangsa yōn'gu 中國華嚴思想史研究 (Studies on Chinese Huayan thought)*. Seoul: Pulkwang ch'ulp'ansa.
- Levering, Miriam 2002. "Is the Lotus Sūtra 'good news' for Women?" in Reeves 2002, pp. 469–491.
- Li Yōngja 리영자 2003. *Pōphwa, Ch'ōnt'ae sasang yōn'gu 법화, 천태사상 연구 (Study on Lotus and Tiantai thought)*. Seoul: Tongguk taehakkyo ch'ulp'anbu.
- Lim Sang-hee 林祥姬 2008. "Yi T'onghyōn ūi Hwaōm sasang yōn'gu" 李通玄의 華嚴思想 研究 (A study on Li Tongxuan's Huayan thought). Ph. D. dissertation. Dongguk University. Seoul, Korea
- Liu, Ming-Wood 1979. *The teaching of Fa-tsang: an Examination of Buddhist Metaphysics*. Ph. D. dissertation. University of California at Los Angeles.

- \_\_\_\_\_. 1988. "The 'Lotus Sutra' and 'Garland Sutra' according to the T'ien-t'ai and Hua-yen Schools in Chinese Buddhism." *T'oung Pao* 74, pp. 47–80.
- Muller, A. Charles, ed. 2007. *Digital Dictionary of Buddhism*. <http://buddhism-dict.net.proxyau.wrlc.org/ddb>. Edition of 12/26/2007.
- Muller, A. Charles 2012. "Doctrinal essentials of the Lotus Sūtra," in A. Charles Muller, ed. *Wonhyo: Selected Works*. Seoul: Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism, pp. 83–139. (Collected Works of Korean Buddhism 1)
- Nakamura Hajime 中村元 1960. *Kegon shisō* 華嚴思想 (*Huayan thought*). Kyoto: Hozokan.
- Park, Jin Y. forthcoming. "Temporality and non-temporality in Li Tongxuan's Huayan Buddhism," in Sandra Wawrytko, ed. *Dao Companion to Chinese Buddhist Philosophy: Dharma and Dao*. Springer.
- Peach, Lucinda Joy 2002. "Social responsibility, sex change, and salvation: gender justice in the Lotus Sūtra," in Reeves 2002, pp. 437–467.
- Reeves, Gene, ed. 2002. *A Buddhist Kaleidoscope: Essays on the Lotus Sutra*. Tokyo: Kosei Publishing Co.
- Reeves, Gene, trans. 2008. *The Lotus Sūtra*. Boston: Wisdom Publications.
- Silk, Jonathan A. 2001. "The place of the Lotus Sūtra in Indian Buddhism." *The Journal of Oriental Studies* 11, 87–105.
- Tanabe, George J., Jr. and Willa Jane Tanabe, eds. 1989. *The Lotus Sutra in Japanese Culture*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Teiser, Stephen F. and Jacqueline I. Stone 2009. "Interpreting the Lotus Sūtra," in Stephen F. Teiser and Jacqueline I. Stone, eds. *Readings of the Lotus Sūtra*. New York: Columbia University Press, pp. 1–61.
- Tsukamoto Keishō 2007. *Source Elements of the Lotus Sutra: Buddhist Integration of Religion, Thought, and Culture*. Tokyo: Kōsei Publishing Co.